Re: Williams

Joshua Powell <jdp@joshuapowell.com>

Friday, December 5, 2025 at 9:56 AM

To: Edwin Williams; **Cc:** cherie williams

Thanks for getting back to me Ed. I will include your response in my article.

JDP

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From: Ed[redacted]
Sent: Fri[redacted]
To: jdp@joshuapowell.com <jdp@joshuapowell.com>
Cc: cherie williams [redacted]
Subject: Williams

Good morning Joshua,

I'm not sure which email you had on file, but this is my current and preferred address. I wanted to take a moment to answer a few of the questions regarding our vineyard, and also provide some context for those who do not know Cherie and me personally.

Although our winery project is relatively new, we are certainly not new to this area or to agriculture. I grew up in a rural farming community and worked on a dairy farm for over ten years through college and medical school. As an undergraduate I attended and graduated from the Agricultural & Life Sciences School at Cornell, so farming has always been in my blood. Cherrie and I moved to this area almost 30 years ago, raised our four children here, and have been actively involved in the community—our church, the Old Chatham Hunt Club, and various local efforts.

In recent years, as I've had a bit more time, we decided to pursue additional agricultural endeavors. We've had beef cattle on our property for about 15 years, and we are now expanding into viticulture. We currently have 400 grapevines planted, with a long-term vision of growing to approximately 5,000 vines. Our goal is to produce a premium New York State wine and support the agricultural community, especially given the development pressures we are all witnessing in the area. Preserving farmland is important to us, and this project allows us to contribute meaningfully to that mission.

Our site is an ideal east-facing slope with Manlius-Channery soils, and we've done extensive research in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension to ensure correct placement of crops and grape varieties suited to our microclimate here in Columbia County. While much of this is informed by data and agricultural science, some of it will naturally involve experimentation—common to all new vineyards in the Northeast.

With regard to compliance, this is an area I am extremely familiar with. I have founded, managed, and operated a fully accredited ambulatory surgery center and surgical practice more than 30 years, so compliance—state, federal, and regulatory—is something I navigate every single day. In comparison, agricultural and farm-winery regulations are very straightforward. We have engaged Crawford Engineering out of Hudson, along with legal counsel, to ensure we meet all requirements, including traffic and noise studies.

A few of the other concerns raised—such as irrigation or wetlands—are not particularly relevant for our site. Irrigation is generally unnecessary after the first year in the Northeast because our soils retain adequate moisture, unlike California vineyards. Our vineyard location is well outside any wetlands, situated on high ground, so that is a non-issue.

From a practical standpoint, I do not anticipate that a small farm winery and tasting room will create anywhere near the road impact compared to the daily FedEx, delivery trucks and heavy equipment that already service numerous businesses along our road. New York State is actively promoting agricultural development—including vineyards—in Long Island, the Finger Lakes, and right here in the Hudson Valley. Columbia County is part of that broader initiative to strengthen tourism and agriculture.

I'm not entirely sure why this has become controversial, as we are simply exercising our rights as long-standing farmers with deep roots in Columbia County. Our intention is to preserve open land, contribute to the local agricultural economy, and create something of quality that reflects well on the community.

I hope this helps clarify our goals and answer your questions.

Warm regards,

Ed

Edwin F. Williams, III, M.D., F.A.C.S.
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